Food Ministers' Conference

495. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether State Food Ministers have agreed to undertake procurement and distribution of grains through their designated agencies and cooperatives as the Central Government agreed to render a package of incentives;

(b) if so, whether this package of incentives was proposed at Conference of State Food Secretaries held on 17th September, 2004 in New Delhi;

(c) whether Food Ministers' Conference held in October, 2004 adopted all the 13 resolutions passed earlier at the Conference of Food Secretaries; and

(d) if so, to what extent these proposals have been implemented by States, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) In the Conference of State Food Ministers held on 18.10.2004, the State Governments in general were in favour of decentralization of procurement of foodgrains. One of the recommendations in the State Food Secretaries, Conference and State Food Ministers' Conference was that the State should be both facilitated and encouraged for decentralized procurement of foodgrains so as to make the PDS more cost effective and to cater to local needs. With a view to facilitate and encourage the State for decentralized procurement of foodgrains the Government has announced the following measures:

(i) Reimbursement of transporation costs incurred by the State Governments for the transportation of paddy from the procurement centre to the storage point and from the storage point to rice mills for milling.

(ii) Increase in the milling rate of parboiled paddy from Rs. 15 per quintal to Rs. 20 per quintal.

(iii) Providing commission of 1% of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) to all societies engaged by the State Governments from procurement of foodgrains.

(iv) Reimbursement of full cost of freight, including transportation of foodgrains from the rail head to the procurement centres

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per the recommendations of these Conferences all the State Governments/UT administrations have been instructed, amongst other things, to ensure that all families at the risk of hunger including migrant labour/displaced persons/homeless population are issued ration entitlement authority slips; priority is given to Cooperatives of women and Ex-servicemen in the matter of allotting Fair Price Shop licenses; priority is given in the allotment of Fair Price Shops to the legal heirs of a Fair licencee, publicizing the information about the scale of issue, the price of foodgrains, availability, decentralized procurement of foodgrains etc. so as to make the PDS cost effective as well as to cater to local taste.

Warning for hoarding of essential commodities

496. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have warned the traders in urban areas not to indulge in hoarding of essential commodities, sugar, crude oil, etc.;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to import sugar to keep the price under control; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government does not undertake any import of sugar. Sugar is on OGL (Open General License) and is freely importable as per the